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SWORD and PEN

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E d i t o r i a l

Finding A Good Teacher

IN last month's edition of *Sword & Pen* we discussed the fact that you did not need to be an expert in order to be able to defend yourself quite adequately. Merely possessing a compact but reasonably adaptable repertoire of practical skills, and the mindset required to bring them into play when necessary, backed up with a level of strength and fitness that permits power and speed to be behind those skills and their application, is enough. Naturally, an expert is certainly better off in a crisis than is someone with only minimal skill, but the fact of the matter is this: You can, within a period of several months in many cases, acquire an adequate level of technical knowledge and physical skill with which to defend yourself, in most cases, if you train in a viable close combat and self-defense system. We are obviously partial to that System which we founded in 1975 (i.e. *American Combato (Jen•Do•Tao)*) and which we teach today, but we readily

acknowledge that there are other good methods and approaches taught by others — most especially other Associate Teachers in our Federation — *ICMAF* — that will certainly deliver what is needed.

A teacher — or, more specifically, a teacher *of those skills that you require in order to be able to defend yourself* — most definitely **does** need to be an **expert**; and the *more* expert he is, the better. In addition to being a technical expert, the person who teaches, must also possess *teaching ability*; for without teaching ability it is hit or miss whether, while being taught by this individual, you actually learn that which he is supposedly teaching you.

So how do you find a good teacher of close combat and self-defense? What professional qualifications and what personal qualities should any prospective teacher possess, before you decide to train under him?

The task was a lot easier 20 to 25 years ago, before this aspect of that which we refer to as the “*martial arts*” became the fad that in some circles it has become today. The commercializers have caught on to the lingo. With backgrounds in everything from kick boxing and competition judo and karate to (what we personally regard as) the irrelevant and somewhat distasteful background that some have garnered in the challenge event stuff, and on to classical/traditional *ju-jutsu*, *karate* methods, or “*kung fu*”, those purporting to be teaching serious hand-to-hand combat, unarmed self-defense, practical close combat skills, and armed and unarmed “close range interpersonal confrontations” survival (the Pentagon’s term!) advertise that they —

- Teach skills rooted in the “WWII methods” tradition. (They use the names “Fairbairn”, “Applegate”, “Biddle”, and “O’Neill”, etc. as though these men were their neighbors or cousins!)
 - Teach only simple, practical techniques — “none of the fancy, classical stuff”, etc.
 - Are “combat experts”, not competitors
 - Do not waste your time with non-combatively effective skills , , ,
- etcetera.

Appealing to the psycho type segment out there, some now claim to be offering

training that “the government doesn’t want you to have”, the elite military units “don’t want you to know”, and/or training that will “make you someone who is feared”, ad nauseum.

These “teachers” are, in our opinion, the ones to run from. Even if that which they offer technically contains an element of the physically practical, the *tone*, the *attitude* and the *mindset* that such purveyors present is toxic garbage, and negates whatever possible value their skill repertoires might contain. **It is not sane, healthy, or desirable in any way, to become the kind of swaggering beast who revels in violence.**

Anyone promising to reveal “secrets” should be avoided.

The techniques of close combat are simple, yes; but that does not mean that just anyone is competent to teach them. Western boxing is simpler still (a *lot* simpler) than close combat and self-defense, yet there are very few men, comparatively speaking, who possess the technical knowledge and expertise, coupled with the *teaching ability* that makes them legitimate, sought-after boxing trainers. ***Do not simply enroll with the first person whose rhetoric sounds impressive and who claims to be a “combatives” teacher.***

While many who teach close combat have backgrounds (and black belts) in the more traditional martial arts, this is not true of every one. Jack Dempsey and Bernard Cosneck (a boxer and a wrestler, respectively) collaborated while in the U.S. Coast Guard on devising and teaching a most excellent hand-to-hand or “combat judo” course for officers. Wesley Brown (famed instructor of U.S. Naval aviators during WWII) was a wrestler. So was his partner, Joe Begala. Men with *serious* backgrounds in boxing and wrestling have on occasion developed an interest in close combat (generally, because they had taken up boxing or wrestling mainly for self-defense and/or because they were pretty tough dudes to begin with, even before they came to their sport). We, ourselves have a background in *ju-jitsu*, *taekwon-do*, *varmannie*, and *boxing*, in addition, obviously, to decades of WWII-based close-in and unarmed hand-to-hand combat, with *and* without weapons. We were fortunate to have been able to study with the late Charles Nelson for a considerable time — as Nelson was a *real* WWII era trainer, who himself trained under Biddle, in the Marine Corps — and Rex Applegate, someone who needs no introduction to *anyone* in this field.

Nor is it necessarily true that an excellent teacher is also the “baddest dude on the block”. Just as we do not select a cardiologist according to the health of the

physician's own heart, so we do not select a close combat teacher solely on the basis of his personal ability to "kick ass". Yes, of course, a qualified close combat and self-defense teacher *will* be a technical expert; but he will rarely if ever have any "championships" or trophies to display. Rather, he will be an expert in combat, and a *master* at teaching it. (O'Neill was a technically "superior" judo man, than Fairbairn. O'Neill held the rank of **Godan** [5th degree], while Fairbairn held the rank of **Nidan** [2nd degree]. ***Yet, O'Neill learned real world hand-to-hand and practical self-defense from FAIRBAIRN, since it was Fairbairn, despite his lesser ability at shiai and randori, who was [and still remains] the undisputed SUPERIOR when it comes to close combat and self-defense.***)

Most good teachers are fairly on in years and quite beyond the age of those who are in the martial arts limelight as "champions" and competition winners. First, because, as we have said, men almost invariably come to the **combative** aspects *from* some other type of background — in general. One of our greatest mentors, the late Col. Rex Applegate, had come from a "background" of *brawling*. Not exactly a martial "art" — but certainly a "background", nonetheless.

Second, because it takes ***time, experience, and maturity***, as well as a great deal of serious research into how best to utilize *both* the practicalized WWII era methodology *and* the best that may be extracted from the classical/traditional arts. (Only a fool or an incompetent dismisses *all* classical/traditional skills and doctrine as "unnecessary"!)

That which some may feel is taught to them simply, and even cavalierly by a real pro, is the result — as the quality doctrine it is — of ***decades*** of dedicated effort, research, study, and experience

The result of amateurish attempts to "cash in" on the "**combatives**" movement, and to jump on the bandwagon that is being driven by professionals, is, for instance, the diluting of ***real*** combatives with that which one observes in the "challenge event" arenas. The goal is of course to make the most, commercially, out of the public's belief that groundfighting is a crucially important aspect of hand-to-hand combat (it ***IS NOT***), while at the same time offering a hefty dose of "chinjabbing", "edge-of-the-hand chopping", "low kicking", and tons of references to "Fairbairn, Sykes, Applegate, and O'Neill".

Be really careful about "military instructor backgrounds" or "law enforcement backgrounds".

First off, hand-to-hand combat occupies a very low priority in the scheme of “essential subjects” that soldiers, marines, airmen, coast guardsmen, and law enforcement personnel must learn. Even the USMC’s new “martial arts program” is — in our personal opinion — sadly lacking. Don’t point to *that*, please, because the curriculum would better be tossed entirely, and the WWII hand-to-hand “combat judo” type training, which was then given to the Raiders, would better replace it, in our opinion! Marines are **FIGHTERS**, *warriors* . . . **killers**, plain and simple. They are not “policemen”; and their training in police-type **bullshit** should be dumped! And I say this after hearing the opinion of an active duty Lieutenant Colonel, who is an assistant teacher in an ICMAF Associate Teacher’s School on the East Coast, as well as being an ICMAF Associate, himself. I also *have* U.S. Marines — and U.S. Marine *combat veterans* amongst my own Black Belts and lower-ranked student body.

Hand-to-hand combat in the armed services’ “elite units” is sometimes better — depending upon how well qualified an instructor may or may not be present to do the teaching. And as far as those *outside* the military who have “trained SEALs, and trained Special Forces” . . . etc. (as *we*, our self have done), these people have done some short-term work **only**. They are not “official trainers” or anything like that, despite their ads.

Those who *are* active duty military and who *are* teaching hand-to-hand combat are teaching brief programs, and the material is sometimes good, sometimes not so good. But rarely if ever is any member of *any* “special forces type” unit in any of the armed services officially given more than — at *most* — 30 to 40 *hours* of hand-to-hand close combat training. Some members have received ***none***.

Present or retired law enforcement trainers who teach/taught “*defensive tactics*” do not necessarily possess the knowledge, background, and skill to be worthwhile teachers of close combat and self-defense, either. It really depends upon the individual. His *personal level of competence and ability must be carefully scrutinized and assessed*. Unfortunately, many who “teach police” are simply graduates of weekend or week-long courses in what is essentially watered-down nonsense, geared to the politically correct requirements of whichever department they work for, or had worked for. There are certainly some outstanding men with backgrounds in law enforcement who also know a great deal about close combat — *but a law enforcement background (either as a career officer, or as a “teacher of defensive tactics”)* is no assurance that the individual is professionally qualified to teach close combat and self-defense arts. Once again, we must emphasize that

our statement here in no way is intended to be derogatory in regard to “**police**” per se. We have the highest regard for honorable and good sworn police officers, and we respect the work that they do when they serve and protect our rights and our safety; but we must be objective and accurate about this matter of teaching combat arts, since a lot may hinge upon that which our visitors undertake to study — and with *whom* they undertake it.

This is reality. We love, respect, and admire our armed forces and our police, and we revere the heroes who wear our Nation’s uniform and guard our Country and our way of life; so don’t listen to any slob who opens his mouth to proclaim that “Steiner doesn’t respect the military, and he doesn’t like cops”. *S—T* we don’t! We *love* our military and we have always considered it a privilege and a pleasure to train military and police (some of whom have earned **black belts** from us), and we wish that these official guardians *were* being properly trained in close combat skills by their organizations of employ. We are the former Washington State Director of *The American Society of Law Enforcement Trainers*. What we *don’t* respect are the commercializing types who use references to the military and police to bolster their “credibility” in the eyes of a gullible, self-defense seeking public. Hell! You’ve got *court* officers and *parole* officers out there who actually have the temerity to *use that “credential”(?)* to authenticate themselves as combat teachers! *R-i-d-i-c-u-l-o-u-s!* Some private security guards, private investigators, and firefighters also have been known to tout their backgrounds as — **SOMEHOW** — being evidence that they are qualified professionals in the close combat and self-defense field! (**Note:** All of these occupations are themselves perfectly respectable and worthy. But they offer absolutely *zero* evidence that the person with a background in any one of them necessarily is a combatives teacher of any merit!)

A good teacher of close combat and self-defense will have a serious track record spanning *many years* in this specific field. He will be doing this *full time*. He may have published articles or even a book or two, and his *teaching record* will reflect, not “competition” or “championship victories” or “classical/traditional accomplishments”, etc. but **COMBAT TRAINING; and practical, realistic self-defense training**. Do your research. *Meet* the teacher. If possible, take a few lessons from him. Take a month or two of classes. Find out how he teaches.

Opinions voiced about a teacher, a school, or a system today should, unless you are **absolutely certain of the reliability of the source of the opinions being presented (and you CAN’T be, without knowing a lot more than you’ll likely know when you hear or read what you hear or read)**, be *ignored*. Find out for

yourself. Often, petty jealousies, resentments, or outright dishonesties account for much of the negativity that you may have heard about “instructor A” or “teacher B”, etc.

We would recommend strongly that you study the material that we present here in *SWORD & PEN*, and on our other site, www.seattlecombatives.com. We do not say this in order to “sell ourself” to you — our reputation and standing has long since been established — but in order to facilitate your selecting *another* properly qualified and credentialed teacher, in whatever city, town, or hamlet you may reside in! With the education that we can give you, you will be able to make an informed decision regarding any prospective teacher. And we acknowledge readily that there are some good ones out there who are perhaps unknown to us, personally. But they are still *good*; and you want to find them, if you are obliged to seek training right where you now reside.

Use common horse sense. Don’t believe promises that any program will make you “unbeatable”, or “feared”, or a “badass dude”, etc. Stay away from people who even want to sell their product on such a basis.

You want **low kicks** that are basic and simple; lots of simple **open hand strikes**, with some judiciously taught punches; **great emphasis** on blows, gouges, knee and elbow smashes, head butts, and biting; **ferocious mindset**; **no ground grappling**; no competition skills, or diluted contest-oriented tactics. Enormous emphasis on **followup**, and on simple, basic **combination attacks**. Frank acknowledgment of the importance of strength training and physical hardihood.

There are some good teachers out there. We’d love nothing more than the privilege, pleasure, and opportunity to teach you, our self. But if, for whatever reason, that is simply not feasible, then we hope we’ve provided some assistance in pointing you toward another school and instructor near where you live, and with whom you can entrust your mind and body for professional level training.

Bradley J. Steiner

Stick With Simple, Basic, War-Proven

Skills!

CHECK our other site, www.seattlecombatives.com, where, in the “Monthly Instruction” section we posted a **brand new** article giving valuable advice and training suggestions regarding the *grabbing* and *claw thrusting* hand techniques of unarmed combat. Check “Book Reviews” and “Articles” sections, too! We are always posting new material

You will benefit enormously, if instead of searching for “secrets”, “mysterious skills”, “hidden knowledge”, and other commercially-touted bullshit, you settle down to a hard, consistent schedule of personal training in what has proven time and time again to work in the *real world*.

The www.seattlecombatives.com site has *tons* of other valuable instructional material and commentary — FREE — for your benefit. Please tell others to check our two web sites! The older postings offer a gold mine of information and advice that will assist you in your training and development.

Are You A Grappler Or A Hitter? — And Ought

You Consider Transitioning?

JUST as there are individuals who, intellectually, are more “*scientific/mathematical*” and other individuals who are more “*verbal/artistic*”, so it is the case in combative inclinations that some people tend to be more inclined to favor a **grappling/throwing** type of combatives, and others who prefer a **striking/kicking** type of combatives.

If you are involved in the martial arts for competition and sport, fitness, esthetic satisfaction, cultural fascination, or any combination of those reasons, then it makes not the slightest bit of difference which type of martial orientation you elect to pursue. All are excellent, all offer enormous benefits, and each one is as “real” and as “authentic” as the other. Let no commercial goof ball who is after your money tell you any different! Follow and train hard in *that which you enjoy the most*.

However, if your purpose in training is to acquire the ability to defeat an enemy in hand-to-hand combat and/or to defend yourself and your family against determined and dangerous physical attackers, it ***DOES*** make a difference — a *big* difference — what approach you decide to pursue in acquiring the skills, tactics,

and knowledge that you will need to satisfy your objective. That which works in real combat is known, and has long been objectively established and proven. **War**, and the application of various approaches to self-defense in various “*urban jungles*” throughout the world for over **100 years** has taught us without doubt and beyond question what is required to meet the requirements of *actual man-to-man close-in armed and unarmed combat*.

Primarily, it is a “*hitting*” (or, to use a more substantial term, “**percussionary**”) approach that close combat and self-defense requires. Fully 90-95% of effective close combat is *striking, kicking, butting, biting, kneeling, gouging, jabbing, and clawing*. The rest is *simple throwing* and *strangulation/choking* skills. These last-mentioned techniques are **not** the same as the throwing skills commonly taught and advocated in judo and wrestling.

That **blows** and not **throws** comprise the last of combative work is an uncontested and axiomatic truth in professional circles. Even in Kodokan Judo — an Art that is largely to be classified as a *grappling/throwing* type of art — the advanced and most trusted senior students are made privy to **atemiwaza** (“body smashing”) techniques, *so that they will be able to defend themselves under deadly, extreme conditions and in circumstances where their contest-oriented methods are insufficient*.

We are **not** suggesting that “hitting is better than grappling”. We **are** insisting that, in *real combat*, it is largely striking and kicking and gouging and related actions that need to be emphasized.

So what is to be said about those whose orientation and inclination is toward *grappling/throwing*, **if** there are any in that camp who seek to train for practical purposes? Simple: *Insofar as they perceive their need to be self-defense and actual hand-to-hand combat, these individuals need to reorient their training so that they work at and on more combatively-functional skills*.

There is no reason why *any* martial art study cannot be drastically modified — if self-defense is what the participant is now seeking — so that **combative effectiveness** and **practical realism** is achieved. Transitioning from whichever art form one has been training in (i.e. classical/traditional or sporting/competitive) to **combat** can be accomplished — normally within a period of only two to three months training time. The same thing applies insofar as the more specialized transitioning from *grappling* to *hitting*, is concerned.

It is not desirable to attempt to do *both* one's former mode of training *and* a combatively-oriented form of training. Attempting to depart in two directions at the same time is never a good idea. Make up your mind what you want.

“Hitters” who hail from sporting/competitive venues (i.e. competition karate, kick boxing, Western ring boxing, or bare knuckle type boxing) may have a slightly easier time transitioning to **combat** training, since they are already “hitters”; but make no mistake about there being a real need for drastic alteration in the curriculum! One neither utilizes the clenched fists for punching as a primary “natural weapon” in hand-to-hand combat, nor does one limit oneself to the kind and style of *match hitting* (i.e. *sparring*) that typifies all percussory *sporting* methods. **Blows** and related impact actions that comprise the repertoire of the hand-to-hand fighter are considerably more dangerous, brutal, ruthless, and underhandedly foul than are even the most “aggressive” sporting approaches. However, having learned how to properly generate speed, power, and accuracy, while at the same time having mastered *balance* during the delivery of strikes *and* the ability to *follow up and keep on hitting* does give a “hitter” some degree of advantage when he transitions to hand-to-hand combat.

One advantage that a grappler often has is his familiarity with close-in contact and body-holding; in addition to having some familiarization with how the human body moves when in violent close combat contact. *A grappler has a “feel” for body movement up close, when grabbing and holding contact has been secured by either or both parties in the encounter.*

One thing that all— hitters, grapplers, and “in-betweeners” — who are involved in a competitive/sporting venue **MUST** begin afresh to acquire, is a proper degree of **COMBAT MINDSET**. No competitive sport involves this mental conditioning (nor should it), and until the trainee gets his psyche around the mental aspect of the matter, he will *not* be an optimally effective all-in hand-to-hand combatant. In this regard, at least, hitters and grapplers have the same task when training for hand-to-hand combat.

So . . . if you're hitter or a grappler you have a job ahead of you if you wish to transition to close combat and self-defense. You're already far along the way to possessing the physical fitness and agility, and understanding of body mechanics *if* you're good at the hitting or grappling art you've had training in; but you do need a new repertoire of skills and a deep revision of your *attitude* and *mental set*, so that you're prepared for **combat**, instead of a “*combat sport*”.

A Homemade Blackjack — And More!

SOME years ago (in the mid-80's) we had the pleasure of meeting a merchant seaman who stopped by our School while in port, in Seattle. This fellow had been a reader of our articles and books on weight training and physical culture since the 1960's and, although not a devotee of close combat and self-defense, was nevertheless very interested in much of that which we had been advocating and teaching for quite some time, in the physical training venue.

During our conversation the subject of self-defense came up and this seaman told us that, since he did have some concern over the possibility of being attacked when in some foreign city, he had devised a little personal defense weapon that he always carried with him. “*And what is that?*” we asked with a leap of eager anticipation in our voice.

“It's a kind of homemade blackjack,” he said.

“Really?” we replied. “How did you make it?”

He reached into his pocket and produced what at first appeared to be a thick, folded Western style handkerchief, or bandana. Then he explained:

“I took a heavy lead fishing sinker and folded this neckerchief around it. I then bound the neckerchief with a heavy rubber band, and by holding the floppy portion of the thing I've got a lead-weighted flail that makes a terrific blackjack.”

We smiled and made note of this fellow's ingenuity. With thanks to him for the idea (and we apologize for not remembering his name) we now pass this marvelous little self-defense tip on to *you*.

To the best of our knowledge it is illegal to carry a manufactured “blackjack”. However — and also, to the best of our personal knowledge — it is *not* illegal to carry a fishing sinker, a neckerchief, and a rubber band that have been fashioned to *serve* as a blackjack! We suggest checking with the authorities, naturally, before going ahead and actually improvising and carrying one of these nifty little improvised “weapons”, but it just may be that you could even take one on an airliner! (You almost certainly *could* carry the components that go into making one onto a plane; and it is doubtful if the noble, straight and true TSA warrior-guardians of the airways would confiscate the rubber band and handkerchief that they found in one of your pockets, and the fishing sinker that happened to be in

another.

The idea of improvising an effective, emergency-carry weapon is not only not a bad idea, it is a damn good idea. An *excellent* idea, in fact. We did a similar thing back in the late 1960's, while living in the Bronx. We cut a six inch section off the end of a solid steel barbell bar, taped it for a grip, and carried this little "homemade yawara stick" with us whenever we strolled the mean streets of the Big Apple (which was often). Although we never needed to use the thing, it was comforting to know that we had a hefty piece of solid steel that we could drive through a mugger's skull, if we had to — *just in case*.

Unarmed defense is inferior to armed defense. That should be obvious; but when you consider the fanciful nonsense that permeates the "martial arts field", and the brainwashing that so many who are involved in the martial arts have had their minds immersed in, it doesn't hurt to state the fact in print.

In most cities today it is, unfortunately, dicey to carry any actual weapon, per se. If you have secured a permit (assuming that you live where they are issued, and that you have gone through the appropriate training in proper handling and use) then of course going armed with a pistol makes perfect sense. But handgun permits generally do *not* apply to edged weapons, or to any other manufactured weapons, as far as we know. The "legal limit" for a knife in a metropolitan area inside the United States precludes going about with a Fairbairn-Sykes commando knife, or some similar *combat* blade. Too bad.

But there is no law against carrying a screw driver, as far as we know. And a screw driver with a six inch or better shaft will go through an attacker every bit as well as a commando knife would.

Be creative. Be inventive.

You cannot carry a hardwood baton with you, when taking a stroll. (Hell! Our uniformed protectors rarely carry them, any more; having given in to "political correctness" and opting for those stupid and ineffective "expandable batons" that "*don't intimidate people like the wooden clubs used to*". Ugh.). **But** . . . you can carry a stout, hardwood *walking stick*. A British or Irish blackthorn, perhaps.

Inside your vehicle, a sledgehammer handle or an axe handle is nice to have.

Did you know that a small, smooth *rock* held tightly in your clenched fist will

increase the damage that your hammerfist blows to an attacker's jaw, temple, collar bone, skull, nose, ribs, or other target can deliver? It will also give your uppercut to a punk's solar plexus — or a fast, straight punch into his sternum — the authority of a golden glove boxer's wallop!

Be creative. Be inventive.

Purchase a small padlock. These are made of solid steel and are heavy. Lock it onto a small chain on which you carry your keys. Presto! You now hold in your hands a formidable striking weapon. By holding the keys and smashing the padlock into an attacker's face you should be able to demonstrate to any punk that you are quite prepared to hit him back — and to hit him *hard*.

Those six-inch cork-backed all steel pocket engineer's rulers make marvelous weapons. You can rip the throat of a punk wide open with a powerful, determined slash; or you can gouge out one of his eyes.

Rat tail combs make great daggers. Even regular men's' pocket combs can be used simply to rake across a troublemaker's face.

A tightly rolled magazine is a great *thrusting* implement, and when driven into an assailant's mouth, throat, or eye (or even his solar plexus, if a stiff enough shot) it will clear the way for a side kick that should leave him lying on the sidewalk with a broken leg.

A simple nail file can be an excellent stabbing dagger. It is more than long enough to penetrate the carotid artery and kill, or take an eye out, or pierce the throat.

Manufactured *yawara* sticks are “weapons”. But utility knife handles (with or without the blade!) are not; and we'd much rather have one of *those* babies in our hand, than some piece of cute crap that we paid twenty bucks for in some stupid martial arts supply shop.

Think about how you can use any particular tools with which you work on a daily basis, as weapons. What do you keep at your desk that might serve in an emergency? *What can you carry unobtrusively and legally?* Explore how the item can **CUT, PIERCE, BLUDGEON, JAB, STRANGLE**, or — if none of those things — consider how flinging it into someone's face can distract him so that you can kick him in the testicles or break his knee with a side kick. A simple handful of aquarium gravel carried in your outer pocket could save your life!

Be creative. Be inventive.

Go watch *Death Wish*, with the late, great actor, Charles Bronson. Note how his character in the movie (i.e. Paul Kersey) uses a roll of quarters in a sock to pound some lump of street manure who tries to hold him up, right across the bastard's empty head. (**Note also** how Kersey later employs a handgun! Smile.)

Learning Techniques Is Not The Same Thing As Developing Them

IF you had a mind to do so, you could purchase a manual that would teach you the information you needed to know in order to fly a plane. Or you could buy an instructional medical text that would explain the procedure necessary for performing open heart surgery. *Or* — you could probably “learn how” (theoretically) to fly a plane or do open heart surgery within a day or so of *personal* classroom lecture by an expert. The problem is not learning *how* to do such things; the problem is *becoming able* to do them.

It's very similar with close combat and self-defense.

It is probable that we could explain and describe with sufficient clarity to convey a full intellectual understanding of the contents and particulars of our System to any intelligent adult in less than 50 hours. *However*, it would be a *very* prodigious individual, indeed, who could pass from white belt to green belt — our first two promotional levels — in only 50 hours of combined class and individual practice time.

It's not that the techniques or tactical and strategic concepts are complicated or difficult to learn. Quite to the contrary; they are easy to learn. That's why they are so practical and effective. However, they must be **acquired** through **practice**. Only repetitious drill imparts physical ability. Combat techniques are *motor* skills, not mathematical formulae which, once read and remembered, remain forever available in your mind. *You have to spend time in physically practicing and drilling in order to make the techniques of personal combat, with and without weapons, “yours”.*

Although we cannot speak for other systems, styles, schools, or instructors, we will offer our opinion that most if not all would be in agreement with us. Assuming that the acquisition of *any* form of physical skill is in question, then it stands to reason that *practicing it sufficiently to achieve the capability to do it* would be axiomatic.

And more. The art of close combat and self-defense is a **CRITICAL** skill; it is not a “recreational” or a merely mundane, utilitarian skill. If and when you ever need to employ unarmed hand-to-hand combat techniques, a stick in personal defense, or a knife or a pistol, etc. in military or other desperate close combat, *it will be a grave matter of life or death*, and you will need your skill **very, very badly, indeed!**

If you really want to be able to use the techniques of close combat then reconcile yourself to the need for *practice, practice, and still more practice.*

One of the reasons we wish to emphasize this point is precisely because quality techniques *are* easy to learn (if they weren't, they'd be useless for emergencies) and this can be misleading for the novice. Upon seeing how readily he can understand and begin to perform the skills that he is taught he mustn't get the idea that that is that, and now he's ready to go to war! He is *far* from ready to do anything after he is taught a new technique, except ***begin hard and regular training on that technique.***

Though few will actually do this, we recommend the following in order to experience and *really feel* what we are talking about in regard to **mastering** a technique and **becoming able to DO it**, as well as “knowing” it:

Take your favorite unarmed combat blow. It could be a hand strike, an elbow blow, a kick, or whatever you wish. Now set aside fifteen minutes every day, seven days a week, for the next two months and *religiously* work to your absolute limit on that single technique. Focus mentally and physically. Go all out. Visualize. Go for as hard and intensive a fifteen minute workout on that single technique as your mind and body will permit you to perform. After two months of doing this **DAILY** (no days off, seven days a week for two months straight) see for yourself the results. *That technique will be **YOURS**.* And you will know it and feel it. The impulse to *do* the technique instantly and automatically will spring forth in a crisis, because you have subconsciously internalized and motor-memorized it. **Now . . . you can DO it.**

You can follow this same procedure with a counterattack that you are especially keen to learn, or with an attack combination, etc. You can (and *should*) follow it as well with all weapon training.

The unbelievable “Jelly” Bryce (check him out on the internet) was a combat point shooter whose abilities would never be believed if they were attributed to a fictional character in an action/adventure novel. Yet he was **REAL**. His “training”? He repeated endless — hour after hour — drill with his draw and point action, in front of a mirror. Result? This man actually ***DREW ON, AND THEN SHOT AND KILLED, TWO CRIMINAL GUNMEN WHO HAD THEIR WEAPONS IN THEIR HANDS AND POINTED AT HIM!*** Talk about phenomenal ability.

Bryce was an anomaly. Without the hereditary factors that made Bryce what he was no one could duplicate the man’s capabilities. *However*, without the hard, relentless practice and drill that this hereditary anomaly willingly and devotedly put in daily, Bryce would never have risen to the heights of incredible combative handgun proficiency that he did in fact rise to.

There is always a price to be paid for anything worthwhile. In the case of close combat and self-defense ability and confidence, the price consists of first coming to appreciate what you need to learn and master, and second, settling down and into the hard, disciplined course of serious *training*.

Get **REAL** In Your Training, Now!

REGARDLESS of what you may be studying or training in at present — even if you are self-teaching, via books and DVDs — you can benefit beyond measure by availing yourself of the CD text materials we have prepared and are offering for sale:

1. *THE MOST EFFECTIVE BLOWS OF UNARMED COMBAT* — \$13.

This concise Manual, which may be read on your computer screen or printed out in a hard copy, describes the **16** most crucially important blows which comprise the “basic blows” syllabus of *American Combato (Jen•Do•Tao)*. You’ll learn what the blows are, how to execute them, which targets to strike, and the best ways to perfect their development as natural hand-to-hand battle weapons.

2. *ATTACK COMBINATIONS* — \$15.

Here in one powerful Manual is described **30** of the most reliable, effective, destructive combination sequences that we teach in *American Combato*. The descriptions are easy to understand, and anyone who really masters a half dozen of these unique attack combinations will be a thoroughly formidable person, indeed, in hand-to-hand combat!

3. *MENTAL CONDITIONING FOR CLOSE COMBAT AND SELF-DEFENSE* — \$30.

A brand new **214 page** self-instruction book that

is available *nowhere else*. It is copyrighted, but you may print out a hard copy for your personal use — or read it on your computer screen. This is the first book to actually teach a comprehensive program of mental conditioning for the combatives student or professional.

FREE with this book, on the same CD, is a copy of Jack Grover's classic, *DEFEND YOURSELF!*, and Robert Carlin's impossible-to-find gem, *COMBAT JUDO*. These two books should be printed out in hard copies for serious study.

4. *RULES OF SELF-DEFENSE* — \$17.

Perhaps the most politically INcorrect presentation of 20 "rules" (ahem!) for winning in anything-goes close combat and self-defense. Each rule is presented with sufficient descriptive force so that you will definitely "GET IT", and a few dramatic illustrations help to get the point across.

This Manual is for anyone practicing any martial art who wishes to gear his training and his mental preparedness for the REAL THING!
Students in our Classes, and those who take private

lessons from us are pounded relentlessly with these concepts; they will be a healthy reminder for students of American Combato. However, for anyone practicing ju-jutsu, karate, judo, boxing, etc. and who wants to get ready for those "contests" played for KEEPS, this Manual is a "must have" reference!

5. THREE MONOGRAPHS — \$22.

Here are three monographs you will not want to miss:

1. *The Myth of Groundgrappling*, 2. *An Annotated Copy of Fairbairn's WWII Silent Killing Course*, and 3. *The Physical and Psychological Factors required For Success In Hand-to-Hand Combat*.

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We will autograph your copy, and we will include a document available from no other source, explaining the significance and role of this little Classic in making the martial arts seeking public aware of an entirely new and more effective approach to personal combat than had hitherto been taught or recognized, outside the military and intelligence training circles of the Allied Forces, during the second world war.

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Helping Your Child Defend Against

Bullies

FOR all of his evil — and Heaven knows, his evil was abundant during his lifetime — Richard Kuklinski (“The Iceman”) did some things that were only condemnable by *today’s* weak, emasculated, vacillatingly noncommittal, asinine, “neither black nor white”, sloppy, anti-masculine standards. For example, when he was a child he handled the situation of his being mercilessly bullied in what *we* believe, at any rate, was a completely understandable — if *possibly* unfortunate but decisive — manner. After he recovered from what easily could have been a fatal beating at the hands of a pack of older, predatory bullies whose onslaught had left him bedridden for more than a week, Kuklinski isolated and beat the leader of that pack of older, cowardly swine to ***death***, with a stick. We are not reluctant to say that when we read the account of this in the book, *Iceman*, we were delighted. When we read, further, that *he got away with that killing*, we ***cheered!***

As a naive and friendly, physically under par, and pretty thoughtful, nonviolent kid, *we* were bullied. So we know what it’s like. In our case it wasn’t horrific — but it was bad enough so that, were we somehow magically able to arrange it without having to bear any legal or other negative consequences, we would ***GLEEFULLY*** bring the ones who did bully us as a child before us today, and beat each one of them — *slowly* — to death. (In fact we hesitate to describe exactly *what* we would do to them, and precisely *how* we would do it, lest we deter our dear readers from finishing this segment of *Sword & Pen* by giving them the impression that we are, ahem!, a bit “*extreme*” — ***Hah!***).

There is no excuse, justification, or rationalization that could possibly get any bully off the lethal hook, as far as *we* are concerned. The act of deliberately inflicting pain, harm, humiliation, loss, and terror upon someone unjustifiably, simply because it brings your twisted, despicable psyche some flicker of sadistic “pleasure” brands you — in our book — as deserving of eternal hell. No plea bargains. No discussion. No redemption. No forgiveness. No ***nuthin’***. Just eternal ***HELL***.

We could not care less if the “bully” about whom we are speaking is young or old, smart or stupid, inclined to ply his bullying “trade” via physical, psychological,

verbal, or combined physical/psychological — or even economic — means. *Delight in the victimization of the innocent whom you feel easily able to dominate and subjugate, and you should burn in hell forever.* There ought be no mercy in the universe for you. That is the unwavering position that we take.

The reader can by now, hopefully, surmise that we have rather strong feelings concerning bullies and those whom they victimize, and that — **obviously** — we feel deeply for, care about, and would like to see justice done on behalf of, the victims of bullies, everywhere, regardless of their ages or the nature of the bullying to which they are being subjected.

A recent phenomenon known as “cyber bullying” has come upon us. Apparently, this malicious activity is being blamed for precipitating the suicides of a number of unfortunate victims.

Parents can do a great deal to assist their children when it comes to dealing with bullies. *First and foremost* children should be encouraged to develop and maintain a solid, healthy degree of self-respect. It is not any malicious or mean-spirited opinion that any of their contemporary scum bandy about in regard to them on the internet (or in person) that causes any child to disintegrate psychologically. ***It is that child’s lack of a healthy regard for himself that causes such to occur.*** With a healthy self-regard what he (or she) will feel toward those who attack him on or off line — verbally or otherwise — is a thoroughly appropriate **HATRED**, **RAGE**, and **CONTEMPT**. *To damn one’s enemies* is healthy. That does not lead to self-contempt or to self-destruction. **And those who attack and/or deride you are, make no mistake about it, and do not whitewash the fact when communicating with children in regard to the matter, your ENEMIES.**

Children, often even more so than adults, can be miserable, sadistic, evil pieces of s—t. There is nothing on earth wrong with plainly stressing that fact to a decent child, and encouraging him to accept it and be guided by the realization that it is true, whenever he confronts the sort of cruelty that all too often bewilders the young and the innocent. *Why ought a decent child be burdened by feeling the need to absorb passively or helplessly the slings of contemporaries whose right to live must be seriously questioned?*

Mental toughness is a prerequisite for living successfully on earth, and the sooner **good** children learn this, the better. And it is *far* better that they learn this from their parents or parent surrogates in a manner that enables them to process it and work with the knowledge in a way that enables them to *cope*, than it is for them to

learn it “on the job”, so to speak, in a context within which, as those tragic suicides have demonstrated, they may *not* be able to cope.

Teach your children that, unfortunately, many (if not most) of those amongst whom they live are swinish and cruel; because teaching them this will help to inoculate them against the venom that is thrust upon them by those swinish and cruel individuals.

By the Grace of God we somehow managed to sustain ourself through a most trying period of childhood years. And also by the Grace of God we came — in late adolescence — to the philosophical premise by which — *to this day* — we live, and with which we are at home:

***ANYONE WHO RESPECTS AND APPRECIATES US
RISES IN OUR ESTIMATE. ANYONE WHO FAILS TO
RESPECT US, OR WHO FAILS TO APPRECIATE OUR VALUE,
FALLS IN OUR ESTIMATE. ON NO ACCOUNT, HOWEVER,
AND UNDER NO CONDITIONS OR CIRCUMSTANCES ON EARTH,
IS OUR RESPECT FOR OURSELF AND OUR APPRECIATION OF
OUR OWN VALUE EVER DEPENDENT UPON OR AFFECTED
ADVERSELY BY ANYONE ELSE.***

Teach any child about whom you care ***THAT*** philosophy; and such bullies as he or she may encounter will make not the slightest dent in the child’s psychological armor — no matter how adamant those bullies may be, regardless of how many of them there are, and despite the seeming formidability of their social position or their means of attack.

Now what about ***physical*** bullying?

The law must be considered here, because the wimpification of American society has put a huge legal obstacle in the way of that which should be obvious: I.e. ***The solution to physical bullying is to beat the living s—t out of the bully; to hurt him so ferociously and decisively that he becomes terrified to overstep the bounds of decency and civility ever again.*** Never mind “teaching him to be more reasonable”. Those who bully do not wish to be reasonable. If they did, they would not bully others. The welfare of the bully — even his survival — ought not be given even token consideration. *Why would it matter?* Is the victim’s welfare and survival a paramount concern of the bully? What a bully needs is to be beaten, pounded, smashed, and whipped mercilessly into submission, and bound to a

course of proper and respectful conduct toward others by the deepest and most permanent nightmare *terror* of what will happen to him (or to *her*) if he or she *fails* to tow the mark!

Obviously, we realize that that which we *feel* so ardently *ought* to be how the management of bullies is undertaken in our society, is certainly **NOT** how it actually *is* or can presently be undertaken.

Adjustments must be made. Sadly, the full course that *we* would impose if we could do so, is not feasible.

But do teach your child to fight back. To hell with idiotic “zero tolerance” rules regarding violence in school. To implement zero tolerance for a child’s physically fighting back against a bully is akin to having zero tolerance for the child taking a drink of water when he is thirsty, or seeking medical help when he feels sick or if he falls and injures himself. *Any human being of any age and in any context has a perfect, natural, God-given right to stand up for his own safety, security, dignity, and well-being and do whatever he is able to do — or feels that he must do — in order to stop another or others from harming him.* Anyone who disagrees with that certainly does not belong in any position where he is charged with the care, nurture, or education of children.

Let the principal of your child’s school know that your child has your permission to defend himself, and that you *want* your child to defend himself, if necessary. And let the principal, and any other relevant individual, know very clearly that he — that *they* — and the entire city under whose auspices the school that your child attends, is run, will face ***national newspaper and internet attention*** and a multi-milliondollar lawsuit if your child is ever thwarted officially in undertaking to defend himself.

Take the matter seriously. Children do. And children depend upon the adults in their lives to take care of them. Any parent who defaults on the responsibility of assuring that his child knows how to handle bullying is being very neglectful, indeed.

The finest physical defense training for a child is a combination of **judo** and **boxing**. These skills provide all of the physical wherewithal that any youngster in grade school needs in order to handle any of his contemporaries who decide to use him as a punching bag, or otherwise physically intimidate or harass him.

We really do take the problem of bullying very seriously. *You*, as an adult, do not like the idea of being pushed around, do you? Well . . . neither does your child.

Kettlebells: Are They Some “Super” Form Of Physical Culture?

IN a word, *no*, kettlebells most certainly are not any particularly superior or “super” form of physical training with weights.

The recent popularity of kettlebells as a tool of physical training is encouraging, but only because it is encouraging to see more people using weights as a medium of physical training.

Kettlebells go back more than a century at least, and they really constitute a kind of “poorly leveraged dumbbell” insofar as handling is concerned. There’s little that you can do with a kettlebell that cannot be done every bit as well (and a hell of a lot more comfortably) with a **dumbbell**. And although the many exercises that we observe being practiced with kettlebells are certainly good and very beneficial, they do not provide movements or benefits that cannot be duplicated with dumbbells.

Perhaps the Russians, who have always been a tough, powerful, and athletically-inclined people, enjoy the special leverage challenge that the more awkward kettlebell imposes, as opposed to that which one experiences with a dumbbell. Or, perhaps because training with a *single* kettlebell has always provided a more affordable weight training medium for the majority of people who pursue physical culture as a hobby in Russia, than has a traditional set of two dumbbells and a barbell; we can’t say. Our recommendation, however, for visitors to our site who have asked, is:

If the idea of trying kettlebell training appeals to you, by all means give it a go! If nothing else, you will enjoy the variety and the break from the standard barbell/dumbbell exercises, and this change in your routine could be productive in giving you a little “interest boost” during your workouts.

For old timers in the P.T. field (like our self!), the old York Barbell Company’s *kettlebell handles* (supplied with some of that great old outfit’s home training sets) might be an interesting option. These attach easily to the standard dumbbell bars and offer the possibility of trying this kind of exercise movement. In reality we

feel that today's *specifically manufactured kettlebells* are superior to the makeshift variety that York's handles used to provide. It can be very, very costly, however, to set up a suitable array of kettlebells so as to provide for progression, and also to insure that a sufficiently heavy kettlebell is available, should you really take to this thing, and build up considerably. With the old York handles you simply added weights from your standard plate set; progression was easy. We are not actually certain if those old York kettlebell handles are even manufactured any longer.

Question: *“Is it true that you need to train with kettlebells in order to develop the greatest degree of athletic acumen and all round strength for activities performance?”*

Answer: ***Absolutely not!*** You can build up and maintain optimum development and strength with a barbell, alone. A barbell *and* a set of dumbbells is probably the best way to go; and the addition of some kettlebell work might prove interesting. But you do **not** need kettlebells to build up.

If you are new to weight training and are considering what equipment to purchase for home use, our advice is: Buy an adjustable barbell and a pair of adjustable dumbbell handles. Obtain a good, sturdy set of squat racks, and a strong flat bench with secure uprights. That — plus more weight plates as your strength increases and you develop over the coming months and years — is all that you *need*. Wait a while before plunking down additional funds for kettlebells. They are best used and thought of as a form of supplementary or variety training to old fashioned, standard barbell and dumbbell exercise.

Make Use Of Our Other Site!

WWW.SEATTLECOMBATIVES.COM has a wealth of information — more added every month — to assist you in your training, and even in your teaching, if you happen to be an instructor. We recognize and appreciate that many of our visitors train in systems and methods other than our own, and we respect all quality approaches and all decent, responsible teachers. Our specialty is close combat and self-defense with and without weapons, physical training, psychological conditioning, and survival preparation. We are confident that, to whatever extent those areas of the martial arts interest *you*, we have a lot of great stuff to offer.

Remember to check through *all* of the articles on that site! There are a lot, and

there is a lot of material that has been posted before, that you may find helpful to you in your training *today*. Good instruction and quality information does not go out of style.

We have received inquiries from visitors who have asked about quoting segments from either *Sword & Pen* or any of the articles on seattlecombatives.com.

Everything that we write is copyrighted, but we have no objection to anyone quoting sections from *Sword & Pen* or from seattlecombatives.com, **providing the following conditions are satisfied**:

- We must never be quoted out of context
- Credit must be given for our authorship
- Our work must never be used to endorse or to imply our endorsement of any person, teacher, system, school, style, product, or publication **without our express, written permission**.

We always like to request of all of our visitors that they please tell others about our two web sites so that as many people as possible can benefit from the material that we provide each month.

Until December then, we remain

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Prof. Bradley J. Steiner

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— e n d —

